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General Assembly
Fifty-second session

Official Records

First Committee

1st Meeting
Tuesday, 16 September 1997, 3.30 p.m.
New York

Temporary Chairman: Mr. Udovenko ..... (Ukraine, President of the General Assembly)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Election of the Chairman of the First Committee

The Temporary Chairman: Rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly provides that each Main Committee shall elect a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall be elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, experience and personal competence. The elections shall be held by secret ballot unless the Committee decides otherwise in an election where only one candidate is standing. The nomination of each candidate shall be limited to one speaker, after which the Committee shall immediately proceed to the election.

Furthermore, rule 110 of the rules of procedure provides that congratulations to the officers of a Main Committee shall not be expressed except by the Chairman of the previous session — or, in his absence, by a member of his delegation — after all the officers of the Committee have been elected.

This meeting has been convened for the election of the Chairman of the First Committee. Are there any nominations?

Mr. Sychou (Belarus): Permit me, first of all, to warmly welcome you as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-second session. The congratulations extended to you by the delegation of Belarus on your election to this important post of chairing the current session of the General Assembly are not just a traditional tribute or a demonstration of courtesy. We welcome you as a high-ranking official and a professional of established authority, as well as a representative of Ukraine, a country with which Belarus maintains close and friendly relations and which is making a valuable contribution to international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations. This contribution by Ukraine has been rightly noted by many delegations in this Hall.

You can count on the full cooperation of the delegation of Belarus, Sir, in carrying out your difficult task.

Having said that, I now have the honour to nominate Mr. Mothusi Nkgowe of Botswana for the chairmanship of the First Committee during the fifty-second session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Nkgowe has been the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Botswana to the United Nations since 1994. From 1992 to 1994 he was Deputy Director for International Relations responsible for international organizations — especially the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Global Coalition for Africa — as well as for the supervision of desk officers for Africa, the Middle East and Asia. He was Acting Director of International Relations from May 1993 to April 1994.

Mr. Nkgowe joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Botswana in 1980 and has successfully served in Stockholm and Brussels.

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As a member of Botswana's delegation, Mr. Nkgowe has participated in General Assembly sessions and has been actively involved in the activities of the Security Council. He has also attended many international conferences, meetings and seminars.

Mr. Nkgowe graduated from the University of Botswana and Swaziland and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and administration.

Obviously, Mr. Nkgowe is a very experienced diplomat with a professional profile well suited for this Committee. We would be pleased to see Mr. Nkgowe as Chairman of the First Committee at the current session of the General Assembly.

The Temporary Chairman: Mr. Mothusi Nkgowe of Botswana has been nominated by the representative of Belarus. Since only one candidate has been nominated, I propose that, under rule 103, the Committee decide not to hold a secret ballot.

I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The Temporary Chairman: I therefore declare Mr. Mothusi Nkgowe of Botswana elected Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.